

CAPS/ICI 1981 TRAVELING VIDEO FESTIVAL

**Skip Blumberg, Peer Bode, Ron Clark,
Shalom Gorewitz, Julie Harrison,
Deans Keppel, Verity Lund, Henry
Moore, Antonio Muntadas, Rita
Myers, David Rose, Joseph Steinmetz,
and Neil Zusman.**

**Tapes by the 1980-81 Award Recipients
in Video, Creative Artists Public
Service Program in New York State**

CAPS/ICI 1981 TRAVELING VIDEO FESTIVAL

NINA SUNDELL, CURATOR

Circulated by

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Sara Fowle, Associate Director

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The Community Service Program of CAPS arranges exhibitions, residencies, workshops, readings, lectures, and donations of works of art by CAPS Fellows in an effort directly to provide artists' services to New York State Communities. The Creative Artists Public Service Program is made possible with funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, and through the cooperation of the Albany Institute of History and Art; Anthology Film Archives; Roberson Art Center, Binghamton; The Charles Burchfield Center, Buffalo; New York University; Port Authority of New York and New Jersey; Sunrise Film Production Company; The Cultural Resource Council of Syracuse and Onondaga County, and Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester.

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PREFACE

The CAPS/ICI 1981 Traveling Video Festival includes video works by thirteen artists, continuing the now seven year long tradition of exhibiting video art by the yearly awarded CAPS Fellowship recipients.

Through the past decade, video as an art form has been acknowledged and sustained with grants to the video artist through the CAPS program. Established in 1970, the Creative Artist Public Service Program (CAPS) offers financial assistance to individual New York State artists in 12 disciplines: choreography, fiction, film, graphic arts, multi media, music composition, painting, photography, playwriting, poetry and sculpture, as well as video. Each year panels of artists select a limited number of working fellowships for these artists to create new work and to participate in community activities. This year's video panel consisted of Lynn Corcoran, Dieter Froese, Teodoro Maus, Sherry Miller and Arthur Tsuchiya, selecting 11 fellowships, two of them to collaborative teams, from 226 applicants. Juan Downey acted as consultant.

In the past, the Community Service Program of CAPS has arranged the itinerary of a touring video exhibition. This year the exhibition and the program notes which accompany it are a joint project of the Community Service Program and Independent Curators Incorporated, a non-profit traveling exhibition service which specializes in contemporary art, with a strong commitment to innovative and interdisciplinary work. The exhibition was organized by ICI, with selections made by Nina Sundell from the video tapes of the 1980-1981 CAPS Fellows in Video. The artists' works, as reflected in the program titles--*Visual Fictions*, *Electronic Subjectivity* and *Alternative Documentaries*--are representative of the variety and stylistic diversity of current video art.

ICI's involvement in the program marks a significant change in the Video Festival. For the first time in its seven-year history, a national tour will be added to the initial bookings in New York State. It is a special pleasure to introduce this year's exhibit to the large and varied audiences it will reach circulating to media centers, museums, schools, libraries and public broadcast systems, not only in New York but throughout the rest of the country as well. We are happy that works originating in a region where video is actively pursued and encouraged will now be accessible to a national audience.

Thanks to all those who have supported this project with equipment, technical assistance and advice: Manhattan Cable T.V. and Suzanne Rose; Devlin Productions, Inc.; Fred Grossberg, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia; Susan Dowling of WGBH-TV, Boston; and last but not least, the artists who lent their work and their talents to the exhibition and the many institutions throughout New York State which have encouraged and supported the program.

Mike Harwig of ICI deserves special mention for his tireless energy in co-ordinating the production, preparing the artists' biographies and handling the many details involved with the tour.

Mary Foster Wallach
Director, Community Service Program

Susan Sollins
Director, Independent Curators
Incorporated

INTRODUCTION

A decade ago, when video art was a new phenomenon, critics noted three major areas of activity: performance related tapes, recording actions conceived by the artist either for a live audience or specifically for the video camera; tapes using electronically generated imagery and those essentially documentary or political in nature. Though the situation has evolved, and artists' video has become in many respects more sophisticated, this classification is still valid, and forms the basis for the program selection of this year's Traveling Video Festival.

The works included in the first program, *Visual Fictions*, reflect an increasing interest amongst artists in all media in the relationships between image and language. Performance, in these tapes, is used in the service of narrative structure. In Deans Keppel's *Me and Mom*, the two work together to provide a devastating though affectionate portrait of the underlying similarities in the conflicting generations within a family. Rita Myers' enigmatic, evocative images seem to run parallel to her text. Metaphorically and structurally related, each amplifies without illustrating the other. Ron Clark's intellectually challenging, visually spare tape is a political fiction in which associations between text and image generate meanings which are not literally embodied in either.

The artists represented in the second program, *Electronic Subjectivity*, all use video technology not merely for the sake of visual excitement or to celebrate the extraordinary capabilities of the medium, but as a tool for describing subjective experience. Peer Bode explores in *Process Tapes* the ways that the basic elements of the video image--timing and light intensity--affect perception. Shalom Gorewitz's *Travels* is a series of pieces which uses sophisticated electronic manipulation and processing to intensify the emotional content of live footage. David Rose exploits the inherent electronic capabilities of camera and editing deck to provide *Song Cycle* with a unified, painterly palette and surface quality which project a lyrical poetic mood. In Neil Zusman and Julie Harrison's *Boundary*, the rapid switches from live to electronically generated images create a vivid impression of political and personal turmoil.

If video is unique in its capacity to generate and modify images electronically, it is still most often used as a recording device. The subject of most of Antonio Muntadas' work is the way that the media present reality. *Between the Lines*, a tape on the making of a news spot, suggests the degree to which the most "factual" television is to a large extent fiction. Artists offer a variety of alternatives to the way facts are presented on commercially broadcast T.V. Skip Blumberg uses one person's point of view to focus and animate his tape on the Winter Olympics; Joseph Steinmetz provides an unusually thoughtful, modulated study of unemployment in Buffalo, and Verity Lund and Henry Moore's *By No Means Conquered People* presents unique material on the Native Americans' Long March to Washington that was virtually ignored by the news media.

The selection of program categories was both obvious and quite arbitrary. Other combinations would have revealed different, perhaps more subtle affinities between apparently dissimilar ways of approaching questions of structure, cognition and expression on video tape. I hope that some of these cross-references will become apparent after the tapes have been viewed and the program notes read, and that audiences will enjoy the vitality of the works presented in the Festival as they reveal the aesthetic and expressive potential of video art.

Nina Sundell, Curator

PROGRAM 1 – VISUAL FICTIONS

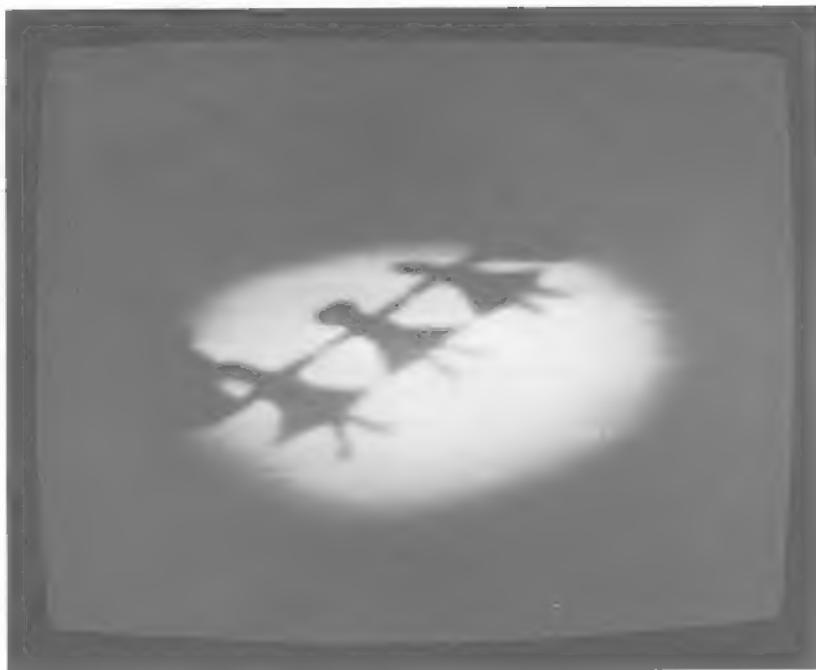


DEANS KEPPEL—ME AND MOM: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY (1979, 23 min., color)

"*Me and Mom: An Autobiography* centers on certain aspects of the mother-daughter relationship during the dinner hour. I am exploring the composite self, my self as experienced by the different people I have been, have been influenced by and will be. It is interesting to me that as we grow and change according to our different influences, we retain certain selves. These selves and the voices from these selves continue to exert influence on our growth and behavior. This paradox, of changing but retaining an essential self, is explored through my acting out personalities at various stages of my development and through projecting voices of future selves (Mom and Gran). A separate self is formed which reflects both itself and these voices. This is a piece which I wrote, taped, directed and produced, and in which I acted all the parts."

Deans Keppel's work explores the many concepts concerned with the self. *Me* (1977) discussed aspects of her personality; *Me and I* (1978) had Keppel on two separate TV monitors, talking to herself. She further pursues this concept in *Soap* (in progress), which documents the breakup of an affair through soap-opera dialogue.

Keppel initiated two CETA video presentations in 1978 and 1979, and has exhibited her work at Media Study/Buffalo; The Kitchen, New York; Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester; and the Westchester Film Workshop. She is currently an instructor at the State University of New York at Purchase.



RITA MYERS—THE POINTS OF A STAR: CHAPTER 1: SEPARATIONS (1978, 45 mins., color)

The Points of a Star is a video narrative which, when completed, will have five chapters. According to the artist, the general thematic framework ". . . is based on two primary elements: the articulation of various disjunctive landscapes and the consequent operations of these on one main character," a young girl who appears in the first episode. Mysterious and evocative images--the shadow of hands cutting out paper dolls, a room filled with drifting mist, pebbles, an object floating beneath the surface of green water--provide the counterpoint to a series of poetic meditations on innocence, self-definition, and separation.

Currently on the faculty of the Hartford Art School, University of Hartford, Rita Myers has been an artist-in-residence at Synapse Cable Network, Syracuse, N.Y., in 1974 and 1977, and at the University of Colorado, Boulder, in 1976. This is her second CAPS Fellowship, and she has also received two NEA fellowships and an Artists Cable Project Grant from the Center for Non-Broadcast Television.

One-person exhibitions of Myers' work have been seen at some of the country's leading institutions, including the Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, The Kitchen, New York, the University of California Art Museum, Berkeley, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.



RON CLARK—DOUBT (1975, 22 min., b/w)

In *Doubt*, Ron Clark attempts to "see how little it takes to signify a whole discourse of meaning." One mode of address is maintained throughout the tape: each of five characters speaks directly to the camera. Their monologues intersect, and sometimes still photographs of one person are accompanied by voice-over narrative by another, so that they seem at times to be part of one another's recollections. There is no explicit connection between any of the narratives, but the political content of the second speaker's discourse is so emotionally charged that it pervades both the images and the other texts, providing a context which may or may not be spurious. The speakers remind us of members of SDS or the Symbionese Liberation Army. They are in fact all New York artists. Their stories might be different aspects of the same situation or they might be completely unrelated. The tape is a study both of cinematographic technique and of the role of assumptions, visual clues, and context in formulating understanding.

Since 1974 Ron Clark's videotapes have been presented extensively in North America and Europe. Exhibitions including his work have appeared in such cities as New York, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Los Angeles and Houston, as well as in Switzerland, Germany and Canada. In addition, Clark has screened and lectured on his work at Rutgers University, the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, the School of Design at Basel, Switzerland, various campuses of the State University of New York, and Yale University. He has been, since 1967, an instructor in the Independent Study Program of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

PROGRAM 2 – ELECTRONIC SUBJECTIVITY



PEER BODE — Selections from PROCESS TAPES: VIDEO LOCOMOTION (MAN PERFORMING FORWARD HAND LEAP), (1980, 5 min., b/w) KEYING DISTORTIONS (1980, 3 min., b/w) MUSIC ON TRIGGERING SURFACES (1980, 3 min., b/w) VIBRATORY SWEEP (1980, 2.5 min., b/w)

*video is a place with a view
video is good clean fun
like having a volcano without the ash
video is seeing the seeing*

Peer Bode's tapes use the structure and process of video to reveal the subjectivity of perception. He offers the following technical clues to the reading of the tapes:

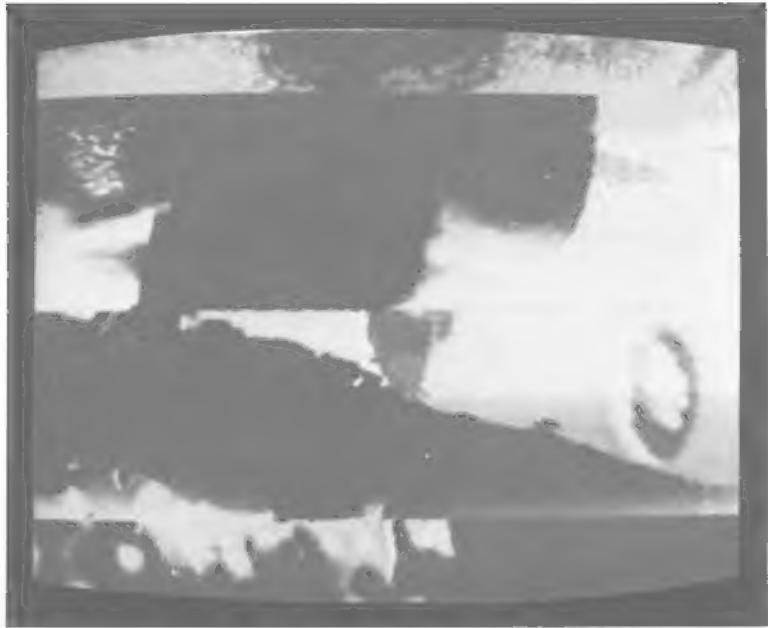
Altering the time relativity or time base of the camera signal results in vertical and/or horizontal drifting images;

Keying cut-outs or spacing plane separations are a result of light intensity comparing and switching;

Light intensity values are sampled at a dot so that the image is scanned as a score for a simple musical structure;

A rhythmic magnetic deflection of the raster or grid results in bending and undulating.

Peer Bode has worked as both a maker of video art, and an authority on it. In the capacity of authority, he has curated, instructed and judged, and has done camera work, editing, lighting, and producing as an artist himself. In addition, Bode has participated in performances involving video, dance and audio. His work has been presented at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Manhattan Cable Channel D; Cornell University, Ithaca; Media Study/Buffalo, and the Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, among others.



SHALOM GOREWITZ—Selections from TRAVELS: MEASURES OF VOLATILITY
(1979, 6 min., color) EXCAVATIONS (1979, 5 min., color)

"In *Measures of Volatility*, a Quantel computer was used to rhythmically grab and release frames to capture gestures and object details. Images recorded in Chicago and Houston were mixed in slow, abstract color shifts caused by voltage controlled chroma transitions emphasizing the landscape textures. Selected images from the Village were sequenced in fast camera cuts and keyed over the city blends in multilayered collage.

"*Excavations* was recorded in Israel during the Spring of 1979. The first section was taped in Beer Sheva at an Arab marketplace and mixed with a layering of signal distortions and warm colors. This is followed by an exploration of ruins and vegetation around a deserted village isolated in the mountains above Jerusalem. Light variations were sequenced to describe the dry heat and pounding sun. The third section is a rapid sequence of cuts between a tractor pulling irrigation lines moving toward the camera and images recorded outside the processing studio.

"In the final sections there is a synthesis of previous elements within distinct spaces of floating bands of high frequency oscillations. The tractor remains constant underneath the colorized flow. By visually harmonizing the extreme natures of explosive situations with the act of irrigation, I hoped to make a statement about Israel. *Excavations* is at once the exploration of the past and a cultivation for the future."

Shalom Gorewitz' tapes have been presented in a variety of situations, from a 1976 Video/Poetry Series (with work by Gorewitz, John Cage, John Giorno, and Richard Kostelanetz); to RASTER, Gorewitz' own weekly screening of new work on Manhattan's Cable C Network; to exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York; to screenings in New York City's most noted New-Wave nightclubs.

Twice the recipient of both National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships and New York State Council on the Arts Production Grants, Gorewitz is currently Adjunct Professor of Television at Hofstra University.

DAVID ROSE—SONG CYCLE

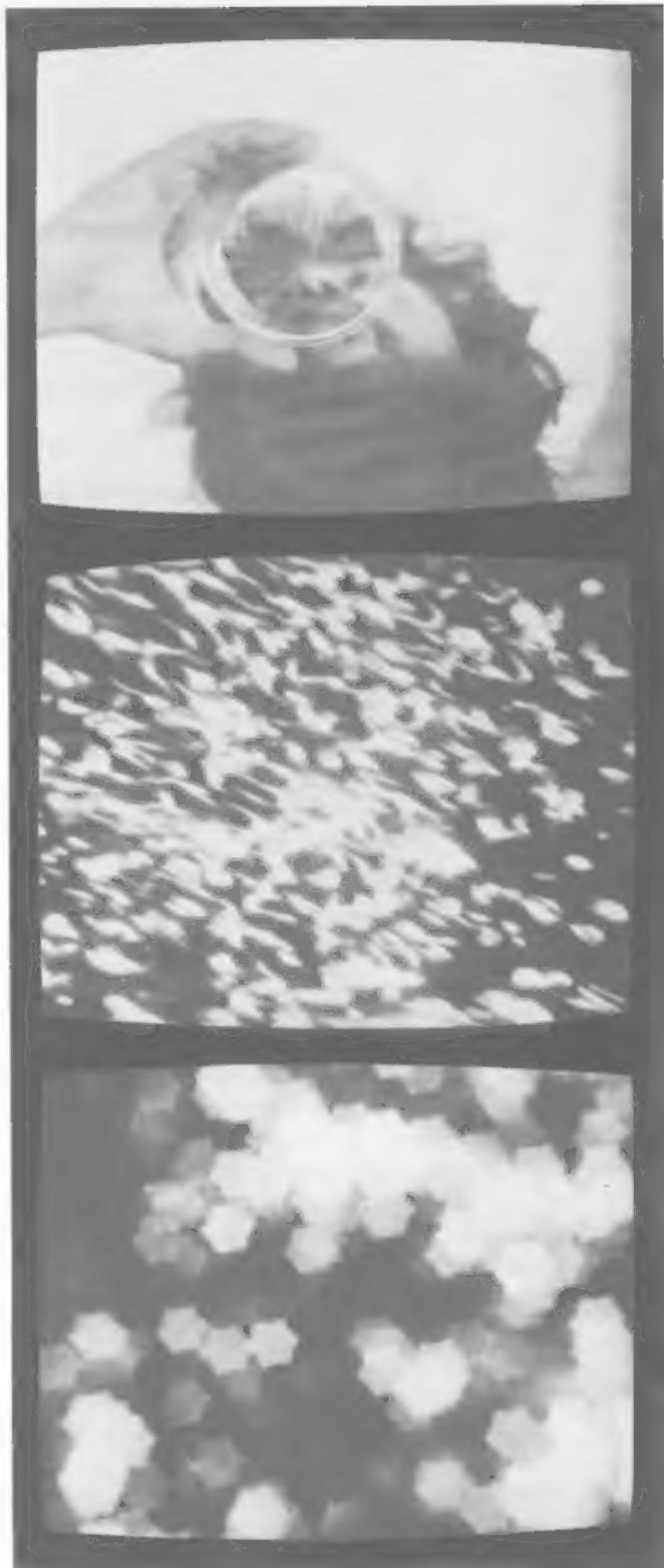
(1980, 26.5 min., color)

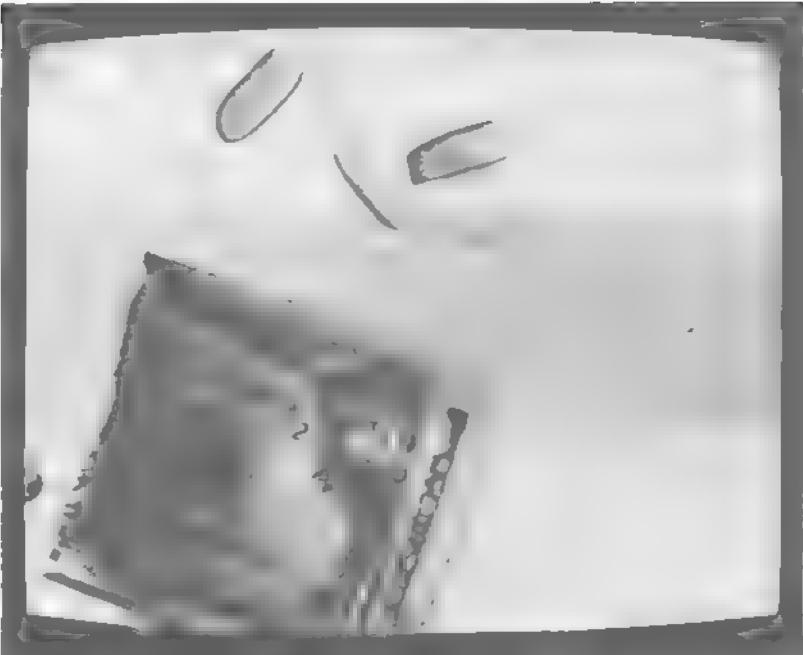
According to the artist, "Song Cycle portrays the elusive quality of events in everyday life. The tape moves through a cycle, from bright daytime images through darkened images and back again. These images are connected by rhythmic water sounds and by the styles in which they were shot. The tape attempts to underscore the similarities in color, movement, and form in all of these images. The effects on the tape were all camera generated. No image processing devices were used."

Water becomes a metaphor for the camera lens, which filters, shapes, and integrates visual experience, and for the sensibility which gives that experience meaning.

His videotapes, which include *Available Light* (1978), *Still Life* (1979), *Portraits* (1979), *Song Cycle* (1980), and *Celebrate Rochester* (1980), have been screened at the Atlanta (Ga.) Video Festival; the Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester; The Kitchen, New York; The 1980 New York State Fair in Syracuse; and several New York State galleries. His work has also been broadcast over several cable television networks, including those in Rochester, Syracuse, Manhattan, and York, Pennsylvania as well as WXXI-TV, where Rose has also been an artist-in-residence.

In addition to his 1980-81 CAPS fellowship, Rose has received production and post-production grants from WXXI-TV and from Portable Channel in Rochester.





JULIE HARRISON and NEIL ZUSMAN BOUNDARY (1980 18 min. color)

Boundary combines a rich vocabulary of personal, historical, and electronically processed abstract images to describe the mythical journey of a female protagonist. According to Neil Zusman it is "an experiment in story telling, ranging from an abstract psychological attack upon a woman, a mythic death and rebirth, a personal dialectic with history, a world view embracing violence as villainy personified, a journey through the worlds of power and innocence, and a return to the transcendence of the individual over the boundaries of this historical mind-set."

Pattern matrices, cross-referencing and formal matching relationships contribute as much as do highly charged symbolic images to the emotive vision expressed in the tape. Machine processing is used to exploit the emotional possibilities inherent in both images and dramatic structure, so that the density and rapid sequencing of visual impressions suggest the multi-layered complexity of contemporary experience.

Julie Harrison has long been associated with the interrelation of video and the other arts. She has taped artists' performances for broadcast over Manhattan Cable Network and Teleprompter, acted as video director for New York University's Dance Education Department, taught video techniques at the Institute for Architecture and Urban Planning in New York and is currently Executive Director of the 168 Mercer Street Studio in New York. Her work has been presented at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque; Franklin Furnace, New York, and the Experimental Television Center in Binghamton, among others.

Neil Zusman has been involved with video projects for the World Trade Center Olympic Relations Committee, Soviet News Agency TASS, the Great Gorge Playboy Club, the American Dance Society in Binghamton, and the Capitol Theatre in New Jersey, among others. In addition, he has acted as a film reviewer for the National Council on American-Soviet Friendship and been an artist-in-residence at the Experimental Television Center in Binghamton.

PROGRAM 3 – ALTERNATIVE DOCUMENTARIES



ANTONIO MUNTADAS—BETWEEN THE LINES (1979, 25 min., color)

For the past ten years, Antonio Muntadas has explored in video and other mass media the way that information is presented and manipulated, the nature of subjective audience response and the myth of "objectivity." In *Between The Lines*, he follows a television reporter as she attends a meeting and edits her report. The disparity between what appears on the news and the 'raw material' we have seen (which was itself implicitly selected and edited) focuses attention on the hidden decisions and opportunities for interpretation in the most apparently factual treatment of information, and calls into question the relationship between documentation and reality.

Born in Barcelona, Spain, Antonio Muntadas' video career has commanded one-person exhibitions in Mexico, Belgium, Canada, and Spain as well as the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Everson Museum of Art, Rochester; The Kitchen, New York; and Mori's Form in Los Angeles. His work has been included in group exhibitions in Eastern and Western Europe, the Middle East nations, South America and Central America as well as the United States. Muntadas has also authored two publications, *On Subjectivity* (1978) and *Yesterday/Today/Tomorrow* (1979).

According to Muntadas, his work is related to the concepts of "media landscape and critical subjectivity."



JOSEPH STEINMETZ—UNEMPLOYED IN BUFFALO: THE BLUE COLLAR WORKER (1980, 30 min., b/w)

Joseph Steinmetz' carefully structured, even-handed exposition of the complex unemployment problems in Buffalo's heavy industries maintains a scrupulously neutral point of view. Avoiding polemics and oversimplification, the straightforward black and white photography, low-keyed questions, and brief interjections of background information discover no villains. Instead, there are only well-meant solutions which fail to address the right problem, and the inevitable misunderstandings of people who either think in abstractions or cannot transcend their own immediate experience. Steinmetz provides a far denser and more modulated view of his subject than is usually seen on commercial T.V. He shows us dignified but fallible human beings manipulated by dehumanized institutions, revealing their tacit complicity in their fate and the total intractability of their tragedy.

Joseph Steinmetz has been working with video since 1975 when he first began studying with Ernest Gusella. Utilizing Electronic News Gathering techniques (ENG), Steinmetz' work has been concerned with social and economic issues in the western New York region.

Since his first videotape, *Dogs* (1978), Steinmetz has been documenting the disparity between the individual and the larger, all-powerful forces of society and technology. His work has been broadcast over WNED-TV and screened at Media Study/Buffalo.

Steinmetz is currently working on two documentaries: on the plights of the Love Canal residents and another on Buffalo's unemployed youth. The latter is a collaborative effort with the Ellicott Youth Training Program, a federally-funded program where Steinmetz is Communications Director and Instructor in ENG techniques.



SKIP BLUMBERG—EARLE MURPHY'S WINTER OLYMPICS (1980, 30 min., color)

Earle Murphy's Winter Olympics fuses the familiar genre of sports programming with a character study of Murphy, a skiing enthusiast, patriot, eccentric representative of America's finest values: an outstanding example of the extraordinary qualities possessed by ordinary people.

We see Lake Placid through Murphy's eyes, and this, combined with exceptionally skillful camera work, gives the tape a kind of personal freshness not usually present in sports footage, and much closer to the felt experience of attending an athletic event. Murphy's attitude contrasts sharply with the chauvinist competitiveness displayed in most media coverage of the Olympics. At the same time, through interviews with athletes and townspeople, Blumberg discreetly reveals the distorting role of T.V. in shaping public perception of the event.

Skip Blumberg has been producing and directing video works since 1969, the year in which he co-founded Videofreex, an early video production group. Later he went on to co-found Lanesville TV, an artists' station in upstate New York.

Blumberg has been an artist-in-residence at the 1980 Winter Olympics and at WNET-TV, New York. With pioneer nonfiction station TVTV, he covered the 1972 Presidential conventions, the rise of 13-year-old Maharaji Ji, and a Superbowl; all were broadcast nationally.

Blumberg has had one-person exhibitions of his tapes at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In addition, *Skip Blumberg in Dazzling Black and White* was broadcast on WNET-TV, New York, in 1979. Blumberg also received a 1976 CAPS Fellowship, and has received numerous grants and awards including a Guggenheim Fellowship (1980-81), and a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship (1977).



VERITY LUND and HENRY MOORE—BY NO MEANS CONQUERED PEOPLE (1979,
30 min. b/w)

Verity Lund and Henry Moore have chosen to document the Long March, a demonstration by Native Americans in the summer of 1979. There is a poignant tension between the Indians' desire for publicity about their grievances, expressed in a sophisticated yet banal political rhetoric which seems characteristic of mainstream America, and their clear sense of oppression and ethnic isolation. At times this seems like a gathering of any group of contemporary working-class Americans, but the faces and bodies in the ordinary cheap clothes are the familiar figures of the 'noble savage' of a mythic past. This tension is echoed in the contrast between the standard broadcast documentary format of the tape, with its alternation of interviews, voice-over narration, head shots and long shots, and the informality and unpretentiousness of the half-inch portapack images. The tape is valuable above all as a record of the forlorn courage and spiritual seriousness of the marchers, and as a witness of their inevitable, sad corruption by the dominant culture.

For eight years Henry Moore has produced videotapes for more than 40 social service and creative arts programs in his post as Director of Media for the Henry Street Settlement, a pioneering arts group in New York. He has also acted as Video Coordinator for the Hazen Foundation and as Media Director for the World Education Foundation, and has trained students in both positions.

With WPIX-TV, New York, Verity Lund produced, wrote, and hosted *A Nation in View: "The Urban Indian,"* and co-produced and wrote *Education: "From Dreams to Reality."* She has also acted as producer, host, and camera operator for the Henry Street Settlement, where she also worked with audio and lighting.

By No Means Conquered People is Henry Moore and Verity Lund's first video collaboration. They received post-production grants for this project from the Synapse Video Center in Rochester and the Lucius and Eva Eastman Foundation.

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<u>DATES</u>	<u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>CONTACT PERSON</u>
June 18-26, 1981	Port Washington Public Library "Media-Port" 245 Main Street Port Washington, N.Y. 11050	Lillian Katz 516-883-4400
July 2-16	Inter-Media Art Center 253 Bayville Avenue Bayville, N.Y. 11709	Kathie Bodily Michael Rothbard 516-628-8585
July 20-August 1	Media Study, Inc. 207 Delaware Avenue Buffalo, N.Y. 14222	John Minkowsky 716-847-2555
July 2-August 6	Manhattan Cable 120 E. 23rd Street New York, N.Y. 10010	Suzanne Rose 212-598-7275
August 3-7	Chautauqua Art Association Box 1635 Chautauqua, N.Y. 14722	Rob Erdle 716-357-2771
September 11-15	SYNAPSE/Syracuse University 103 College Place Syracuse, N.Y. 13210	Henry Baker 315-423-3100
September 18-25	Albany Public Library 161 Washington Avenue Albany, N.Y. 12210	Bob Katz 518-449-3380
October 12-16	Experimental TV Center 180 Front Street Owego, N.Y. 13827	Sherry Miller 607-687-1423 687-5045
October 1-5	Visual Studies Workshop 31 Prince Street Rochester, N.Y. 14607	Arthur Tsuchiya 716-442-8676
October 19-23	Rockefeller Art Center State University College at Fredonia Fredonia, N.Y. 14063	Radford Thomas 716-673-3217
October 26-31	Media Bus 120 Tinker Street Woodstock, N.Y. 12498	Bart Friedman 914-679-7739
November 2-6	The New York State College of Ceramics Division of Art and Design Alfred University Alfred, N.Y. 14802	Harland Snodgrass 607-871-2441 607-871-2427